

## FAQs – Country of Origin Labeling (Beef and Pork Repeal)

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**Q:** *How does the omnibus bill affect Country of Origin Labeling (COOL) requirements?*

A: The omnibus bill repealed the mandatory COOL requirements for muscle cuts of beef and pork, and ground beef and pork.

**Q:** *Are the other covered commodities affected by the proposed omnibus bill?*

A: No; COOL regulatory requirements are still in effect for the remaining covered commodities: muscle cut and ground chicken, lamb, and goat; wild and farm-raised fish and shellfish; fresh and frozen fruits and vegetables; peanuts, pecans, macadamia nuts, and ginseng.

**Q:** *What are the next steps in the regulatory process to repeal COOL requirements for beef and pork?*

A: USDA will be amending the COOL regulation as expeditiously as possible to reflect the repeal of muscle cut and ground beef and pork items.

**Q:** *When does this repeal go into effect?*

A: Effective immediately, USDA will not enforce the COOL requirements for muscle cut and ground beef and pork items as outlined in the Jan. 15, 2009, and May 23, 2013, final rules.

**Q:** *If my COOL retail review included a noncompliance(s) cited for beef and pork items, am I still required to submit corrective actions to address the noncompliance(s)?*

A: No; effective immediately, USDA will not enforce the COOL requirements for muscle cut and ground beef and pork. Corrective actions will not be required for muscle cut and ground beef and pork items; however, retailers are required to submit corrective actions for noncompliance findings for the remaining covered commodities: muscle cut and ground chicken, lamb, and goat; wild and farm-raised fish and shellfish; fresh and frozen fruits and vegetables; peanuts, pecans, macadamia nuts, and ginseng.

**Q:** *Will retail surveillance reviews be conducted in 2016?*

A: Yes; retail surveillance reviews for all other covered commodities will be conducted as planned for 2016. During the reviews, muscle cut and ground beef and pork items will no longer be reviewed for COOL compliance.

**Q:** *Will the number of retail surveillance reviews decrease due to the repeal of beef and pork?*

A: No; AMS will continue to conduct retail surveillance activities in all 50 states in 2016. The proportion of beef and pork covered commodities accounts for approximately 17 percent of all COOL covered commodities sold at retail.

**Q:** *Who can we contact with questions about COOL?*

A: Contact a COOL Specialist by phone at (202) 720-4486 or send an email to: [cool@ams.usda.gov](mailto:cool@ams.usda.gov).